European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development

European Commission

Topic 4: Quantification of LEADER/CLLD Contributions and Measuring Their Secondary Effects

Working Package 1

Thematic Working Group No 8
'Ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020: Learning from practice'

June 2020

Disclaimer: *This document has been prepared by evaluation experts based on good practice available from the current programming period. The document has been consulted with a Sounding Board including Member States' representatives in May 2020 and has been reviewed in line with the comments received. This document is non-binding and only intended to facilitate the work of evaluators and managing authorities in the context of preparing for the ex post evaluation of the RDPs 2014-2020.*

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Recommended citation:

EUROPEAN COMMISSION – Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development – Unit C.4 (2020): Topic 4: Quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions and measuring their secondary effects – Working Package 1 'Assessment of RDP effects on achieving balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities' - Thematic Working Group no 8 'Ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020: Learning from practice'. Brussels.

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The Evaluation Helpdesk is responsible for the evaluation function within the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) by providing guidance on the evaluation of RDPs and policies falling under the remit and guidance of DG AGRI's Unit C.4 'Monitoring and Evaluation' of the European Commission (EC). In order to improve the evaluation of EU rural development policy the Evaluation Helpdesk supports all evaluation stakeholders, in particular DG AGRI, national authorities, RDP managing authorities and evaluators, through the development and dissemination of appropriate methodologies and tools; the collection and exchange of good practices; capacity building, and communicating with network members on evaluation related topics.

Additional information about the activities of European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development is available on the Internet

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INTRODUCTION

This document is developed as a part of the Working Package 1 of the Thematic Working Group 8 'Ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020: Learning from practice', which analyses the emerging evaluation issues in relation to the assessment of RDP effects on achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities. This document specifically highlights issues related to the quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions and measuring their secondary effects in the 2014-2020 programming period.

This is **a non-binding document**, which aims to support Member States to exchange and learn from current practices of assessing RDP impacts related to the CAP objective, 'balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities'. Additionally, this document should serve the purpose of supporting the needs of evaluation stakeholders in improving the quality of evaluations when preparing for the ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020.

QUANTIFICATION OF LEADER/CLLD CONTRIBUTIONS AND MEASURING THEIR SECONDARY EFFECTS

1. Context

LEADER/CLLD is typically programmed under the Focus Area (FA) 6B 'Fostering local development'. This focus area is where the primary contributions are expected and also where job creation and the proportion of the rural population benefiting from improved services/infrastructure are included as target indicators. RDP intervention logic also suggests that LEADER/CLLD contributes can be made in other focus areas. Consequently, LEADER/CLLD contributions can therefore be reported, in principle, for all Focus Area related common evaluation questions (CEQs)[1]. Thus, all operations implemented via CLLD strategies which have shown primary or secondary contributions.

2. Relevant guidance

The following technical documents can support Member States in their assessment of their RDP's results, achievements and impacts that should be considered when trying to quantify LEADER/CLLD contributions and their secondary effects:

Technical support document	Relevant parts, sections
Assessment of RDP Results: How to Prepare for Reporting on Evaluation in 2017	Several chapters referring to specificities of LEADER throughout all the document and annexes
Evaluation of LEADER/CLLD	Several chapters throughout the document referring to LEADER/CLLD contribution to FAs other than FA 6B, secondary contributions and the ex post reporting requirements
Working document for the Rural Development Committee, Rural Development Annual Implementation Report, Monitoring Tables 2014-2020	Tables with LEADER data items to monitor the contributions of LEADER operations to various Focus Areas
Evaluating CLLD Handbook for LAGs and FLAGs	Several chapters on data collection and evaluation methods for LAGs

3. Key facts

The analysis of the evaluation sections in the Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs) submitted in 2019 revealed a low level of quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions and a low level of reporting on secondary effects of LEADER/CLLD. In relation, for instance, to the contribution of LEADER/CLLD to job creation, its budget is relatively small to have a meaningful contribution to job creation and many RDPs have not quantified this. As for the quantification of the secondary contributions to other FAs, it was only recommended as a good practice, but not mandatory to quantify them, therefore many RDPs did not measure/report on them.

[1] Annex V to Regulation (EU) No 808/2014.

4. Identified issues and solutions applied

The analysis of the evaluation sections of the AIRs submitted in 2019 and feedback from Yearly Capacity Building Events have identified several issues in relation to the quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions and their secondary effects. In addition, the Evaluation Helpdesk has carried out a survey to selected RDPs and complementary interviews with evaluation stakeholders in those RDPs to further analyse these issues and identify solutions implemented. These issues and solutions are presented below.

Capturing the full effect of LEADER/CLLD

Issue 1: The existing common target/result indicators were considered by many RDPs as insufficient for capturing the full effect of LEADER/CLLD, including those effects at the RDP level to FAs other than FA 6B

The large variety and nature of LEADER/CLLD operations creates the need for collecting further information from LAGs to complement the existing common indicators and answer the common evaluation questions. For instance, the contributions of LEADER/CLLD to local development may require the assessment of other aspects, like the contributions to social capital or governance, through additional judgment criteria and indicators. Moreover, the contributions of LEADER/CLLD supported operations to other FAs (e.g. to energy savings (FA 5B)) may require additional indicators to capture these energy savings outside the agri-food sector. Overall, the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD and its contributions depends significantly on the robustness of the information and data received from LAGs.

Solution: Development of additional indicators to measure secondary effects of LEADER/CLLD

The current legislative framework gives the possibility to RDPs to define and use additional judgment criteria and indicators if they need to, in order to answer the CEQs. Additional indicators were therefore developed by some RDPs to help capture secondary effects of LEADER /CLLD and answer the CEQs. In order to do this, it is important for Local Action Groups (LAGs) to identify what is the main objective of each operation and link it to the appropriate focus area(s). For instance:

- **Hungary** developed additional indicators with information collected through a questionnaire to LAGs. This information was used to assess the secondary effects on different FAs (notably FA 1A ‘Fostering innovation, cooperation and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas’ and FA 1B ‘Strengthening the links between agriculture, food production and forestry and research and innovation’). The additional indicators include:
    - The proportion of developments classified as innovative within developments under Local Development Strategies (LDS);
    - Number of initiatives implemented or resulting from cooperation within the framework of LEADER Sub-measures 19.2 (preparatory support) and 19.3 (cooperation activities).

- **Slovenia** also developed additional indicators to assess the secondary effects on different focus areas:
    - Innovative LAG operations as a proportion of all innovative operations in the RDP (for FA1A);
    - Number and structure of partners in cooperation projects, including their roles and obligations (for FA 1B);
    - Newly created jobs within each LAG by applicant sector (for FA 6A ‘Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation’);
    - Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas (for FA 6C ‘Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas’).

Tool 1 *in the Toolbox offers more ideas for additional judgment criteria and indicators.*

Solution: Approaches/methods for collecting additional information

Additional information can be collected through surveys, focus groups, thematic studies or additional questionnaires, as long as it is consistent for all LAGs. For instance, the questions asked should be the same for all LAGs in order to allow for aggregation and comparison of the answers/information collected.

- **Poland** and **Finland-Mainland** have used surveys with LAG managers, LAG boards, LEADER/CLLD administration and other regional stakeholders.
- **Estonia** and **Croatia** have used focus groups with LAG representatives to evaluate the contributions of supported activities to employment and quality of life in rural areas.
- In smaller countries like **Malta**, which has only three LAGs, meetings with LAGs were sufficient to obtain all the required information on the implementation of their strategies and the strengths and challenges associated with the implementation of LEADER/CLLD. In addition, the three LAGs have a common database, with common indicators which are specific to their strategies. This approach is useful for small countries and regional RDPs that have only a few LAGs.
- **Hungary** plans to conduct a thematic study to examine the implementation of the employment objectives of LEADER/CLLD local development strategies, while focusing on the factors that may help or hinder them.
- In **Slovenia**, the evaluators developed a questionnaire to collect additional information from LAGs. It was used to not only complement the common indicators and answer the CEQs, but also to assess other elements of LEADER/CLLD that were considered relevant in Slovenia. The topics covered by the LAG questionnaire included: financial capacity of LAGs, partnership aspects, selection of operations, LDS monitoring and reporting, results of the implementation of the LDS in terms of social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development of rural areas, the implementation mechanism of the local development strategy and secondary contributions. The questionnaire and a focus group with LAGs enabled the collection of this data, which was not collected within the RDP database.

Tool 2 *in the Toolbox presents the complete questionnaire from Slovenia.*

Solution: Assessing the added value of LEADER/CLLD to capture LEADER/CLLD effects on local development in rural areas

The assessment of the benefits obtained through the proper application of the LEADER method (the added value of LEADER/CLLD) contributes to obtaining a fuller picture of the effects of LEADER/CLLD on local development. Although it is not compulsory, the collection of information on other elements of LEADER/CLLD may cover aspects related to the actual delivery method of LEADER/CLLD (e.g. social capital, implementation mechanism and governance) and provide a fuller picture on the effects of LEADER/CLLD on local development in rural areas.

A number of RDPs evaluated aspects related to the added value of LEADER/CLLD, by using additional evaluation questions, judgment criteria and indicators, with some applying innovative methods:

- **Italy** used the social networking approach to assess the added value of LEADER/CLLD in terms of social capital, notably in the LAG area of Prealpi and Dolomiti.
- **Germany** applied a LAG-survey approach in four federal states and combined it with monitoring data to assess the governance aspects of the added value of LEADER/CLLD.
- **ES-Cataluña** is planning a dedicated evaluation of LEADER/CLLD, which will go in depth into all the aspects of LEADER/CLLD, including the delivery method and its added value.
- **Latvia** and **Poland** evaluated governance, the former through an open consultation with the LAG network and the latter through a survey.

LAG Capacity building

Issue 2: Improve the evaluation capacity at the LAG level

LAGs are at the centre of information collection for assessing the effects of LEADER/CLLD. However, several LAGs have **limited knowledge or familiarity with data collection concepts and methods**. For instance, some RDPs faced issues with the data collected from LAGs due to a lack of familiarity with the specific ways and concepts of data collection and processing. For some LAGs, differing interpretations of the indicators led to an overestimation of the number of jobs created or the number of inhabitants who benefit from improved services in rural areas. In other cases, evaluators were not familiar with methodologies for properly assessing some of the result indicators (e.g. for the calculation of jobs created in supported LEADER/CLLD operations).

Specific areas where LAGs need to improve their capacities include the interpretation of data and the rationale for data collection (i.e. what is the data used for, which implies a good understanding of the common indicators). Other areas of improvement are how to communicate with beneficiaries on data requirements and key evaluation concepts, including the distinction between primary and secondary effects or the distinction between outputs and results. A good understanding of the different indicator definitions and of the evaluation concepts would possibly reduce the risk of errors like the overestimation of expected results or double counting of certain data items.

Solution: Capacity building approaches

The capacity of LAGs can improve through capacity building or through targeted support and guidance on evaluation approaches and methods. This includes discussing which data is needed and how to collect it. This in turn will contribute to building a monitoring and evaluation culture amongst LAGs.

- **Ireland** has invested resources on improving monitoring and evaluation of LEADER through its LEADER/CLLD IT system, which currently captures a significant amount of data. In order to further support LAGs and improve their capacity, a 'LEADER Programme - Performance Monitoring Guidance Document' has been drafted and distributed to all LEADER/CLLD groups. This guidance document describes the monitoring data that is collected via Ireland's LEADER/CLLD IT system and explains the collection requirements, as well as emphasises the importance for the groups to enter accurate monitoring/evaluation data. Ireland has reinforced the importance of monitoring and evaluation activities at every opportunity, highlighting the significance of this information, for example by explaining how it is used to satisfy, not only EU requirements, but also national and local requirements. As a consequence, there is a notable positive shift in culture (pertaining to monitoring and evaluation activities) which are continuing to be encouraged.

- In **Romania**, the Managing Authority (MA) and Paying Authority (PA) guarantee their support to LAGs through trainings, meetings at the territorial level, providing manuals and maintaining a website (especially for monitoring and evaluation of local development strategies).

- The **Spanish NRN** organises yearly capacity building events for LAGs. Each year the training events become more focused and intensive. The first was an overview of evaluation methods and tools and the latest one in March 2020 was a 4-day training workshop organised in a rural area, with the participation of LAGs from all over Spain and focusing on a detailed description of evaluation concepts, methodologies and tools, including intensive practical work to test the methods/tools presented.

- In **Spain-Cataluña**, the MA organises monthly coordination meetings with all LAGs. The MA also provides written guidance (e.g. on how to develop strategies and on how to complete yearly follow-up reports). Currently, LAGs are undertaking an evaluation of their actions up to 2020, which they have also received guidance on.

- **Poland** has set up a Thematic Group on the LEADER Approach, which operates in the National Rural Network (NRN) and disseminates knowledge on the LEADER/CLLD approach. This thematic group brings together LAG representatives and has been an active forum for building LAG capacity on monitoring and evaluation related activities.
- At the **EU level**, FARNET has also developed a handbook for LAGs and FLAGs on the evaluation of CLLD. The handbook offers guidance on evaluation methods and tools usable by all LAGs.

Tool 3 *in the Toolbox includes proposed content for the capacity building of LAGs, based on the Helpdesk's experience.*

Governance

Issue 3: Governance issues

Issues related to governance have been identified in terms of unclear or non-systematic information flows among the different stakeholders. There are several stakeholders involved along the implementation process, from the application period to the monitoring and evaluation, notably the beneficiaries, LAGs, MA and PA. A clear description of who does what at each step of the process in terms of data and information collection and processing can ensure that there is a smooth flow of information, while reducing the potential bias of data collection from LAGs.

Solution: Clear information flows for improved governance

Finland has developed a clear information flow by linking all programme stakeholders with its operations database. At every step of programme implementation there is a clear definition of who are the stakeholders providing and using information from the database (MA, PA, LAGs, beneficiaries, others) and what their role is (collect, record, consult or extract data, etc.). The Finnish MA expects that this e-government system together with any additional information provided by LAGs will enable a robust LEADER/CLLD evaluation for the ex post.

Tool 4 *in the Toolbox depicts the information flows between different stakeholders in Finland.*

Toolbox

Tool 1: Examples of additional indicators to help capture the LEADER/CLLD contributions to FAs other than FA 6B

Operation	Secondary contribution	Judgment criteria/CEQ	Additional Indicators
Municipal investments aimed at energy savings and efficiency. Support to improve the energy efficiency of processes in the productive fabric of the territory through support for investment in companies other than agriculture, livestock and the agri-food industry	Energy efficiency (FA5B)	RDP interventions contributed to increasing efficiency in energy use outside the agri-food sector in rural areas (linked to CEQ12)	For SMEs (other than in agri-food): Tonne(s) of Oil Equivalent (T.O.E.)/ standard output of production (in accordance with production or service provided) This indicator would be similar to the Complementary Result Indicator R.14 For public buildings: T.O.E/m2 In this case operations would mainly relate to surface area
An operation was launched to improve tourism services in a LAG territory in a High Nature Value (HNV) area that includes the training of local service providers on the environmental value of HNV areas	Knowledge base of rural areas (linked to FA1A) Protection of biodiversity in HNV areas (linked to FA4A)	RDP interventions contributed to the increase in the knowledge base in rural areas (linked to CEQ1) RDP interventions contributed to protect biodiversity in HNV areas (linked to CEQ8)	Number of operations contributing to the increase in the knowledge base Number of training days of local service providers on the environmental value of HNV areas Number of operations contributing to the protection of biodiversity in HNV areas
An operation supported the reconstruction and equipping of a building with wood processing technology on a farm. This operation increased the productive base of the farm and created one job, while the biomass from the wood processing has been used to produce bio-fuel	Production of renewable energy (FA5C) Performance of the farm (FA2A)	RDP interventions contributed to RE production (linked to CEQ13) RDP interventions contributed to improving the economic performance of supported farms (linked to CEQ4)	% increase of production of RE energy from farms (e.g. biofuels, wind, solar) Number of local products finalised (produced, processed and packaged)
An operation supported the creation of partnerships for the development of innovative solutions for the provision of tourism services	Promotion of innovation (FA1A)	RDP interventions supported innovation? (linked to CEQ1)	Innovative solutions in the tourism service sector

Source: Guidelines Evaluation of LEADER/CLLD, Working Document Evaluation-related queries and Evaluation Helpdesk input

Tool 2: Evaluation support on the quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions and measuring secondary effects through a questionnaire to LAGs: Good practice from Slovenia

Sources of information collected in Slovenia for the quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions

Slovenia uses three main data sources for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD contributions:

- the RDP operations database, which includes data imputed by LAGs;
- LAG reports produced on a yearly basis;
- information from a questionnaire targeted specifically at LAGs to collect additional information that is not in the RDP's database;
- focus group discussions with LAGs.

Indicators used to evaluate LEADER/CLLD at the RDP level

In addition to the common output and result indicators, Slovenia has devised additional quantitative indicators to evaluate LEADER/CLLD:

- LAG structure by type and number of members;
- the average number of operations of each LAG;
- share of innovative LAG operations from all innovative operations in the RDP;
- number of newly created jobs within each LAG by sector;
- average number of completed operations (services or infrastructure) of each LAG per 1000 citizens;
- proportion of supported LEADER/CLLD activities by the number of operations supporting biodiversity, better water and soil management;
- number of participants in local initiatives;
- proportion of women from all participants in local initiatives;
- proportion of participants belonging to vulnerable groups from all participants in local initiatives;
- proportion of residents in the LDS-covered areas satisfied with local initiatives compared to the total population;
- proportion of supported operations (LEADER/CLLD) contributing to the preservation of rural cultural heritage; compared to the total number of operations;
- number of sustained jobs as a result of LAG activities;
- number of operations contributing to greater inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Two additional qualitative indicators are also used:

- level of cooperation between LAGs;
- criteria and procedures for approving operations.

Content of the Questionnaire for collecting additional information from LAGs

Theme 1-Strategy implementation: Financing of LAG's operations and functioning of LAG

1. Are available financial resources under the LEADER/CLLD measure sufficient for the management and animation activities within the LAG?
2. Are available financial resources for the implementation of the LEADER/CLLD operations sufficient to achieve the objectives of the LDS?
3. Have you encountered difficulties in securing funding their own participation (public or private)?
4. If yes, what difficulties did you face and how did you solve them?
5. Indicate the number of partners involved in the preparation of the LDS.
6. Indicate the proportion of currently involved partners by sector (public sector, private sector, civil society).
7. How do you assess contribution of the LAG's animation activities to the integration of new players in the LAG's activities and the strengthening of cooperation between them?

8. Please indicate in your opinion what is the effectiveness of the partnership within the LAG?
9. Do you think that all key rural development actors in the LAG are involved?
10. What is the share of women in LAG bodies?
11. What is the age structure of the members of the LAG Assembly?

Theme 2: Strategy implementation: selection of operations

1. How can potential beneficiaries become familiar with LDS and funding options for operations?
2. How satisfied are you with the number of project applications received?
3. How satisfied are you with the quality and relevance of the operations submitted?
4. Do you consider their (potential) impact on LDS objectives when selecting operations?
5. At what stage is this taken into account? (Application, selection criteria, decision making).

Theme 3: LDS monitoring and reporting

1. How many times have you changed your LDS based on monitoring results?
2. Describe what was the main reason for the LDS changes?
3. How do you consider the monitoring results when adjusting your LDS?
4. Does your LDS have quantified objectives?
5. Are project promoters expected to report on achievement of objectives?
6. How do you monitor implementation of operations? (Reporting by promoter, on-site control, revision, ...)
7. What elements of LDS implementation are you monitoring and reporting to? (Financial indicators, number and type of operations, progress towards target, ...)
8. How often it is reporting carried out within the LAG and in relation to the general public?
9. How much time do you spend on monitoring, self-assessment and reporting activities (out of all the time spent for management and animation the LAG)?
10. What was the support that the participants in the implementation of the LDS received in connection with monitoring the implementation of the LDS?
11. What additional support would you like in relation to monitoring implementation of LDS?

Theme 4: Self-assessment of LDS

1. Does your LAG have a structured system for self-assessment of LDS implementation performance?
2. What kind of self-assessment is it?
3. How is the self-assessment process going?
4. Do you think that the self-assessment system can be improved?
5. Which of the following did you inform about the results of the LDS self-assessment (formal or otherwise)? (Lead Partner employees, partner organisations, LAG members, Rural Network, etc.)
6. Please indicate how different stakeholders participate in the LDS self-assessment. (Direct involvement in self-assessment, conducting surveys, data collection, etc.)
7. What is the main purpose of evaluating LDS implementation? (Proof of success, preparing the next LDS, sharing good practice, etc.)
8. What do you think falls within the scope of evaluating local development strategies? (Achieving LDS goals, coherence of operations with LDS, effectiveness of addressing target groups, efficiency of the implementation system, etc.) What support from MA has received all those involved in the implementation of the LDA in relation to self-assessment? (Training, one-to-one counselling, guidance, etc.)

Theme 5: Results

1. How would you rate the implementation of LDS in your LAG so far?
2. How successful is the strategy set in pursuing the overarching objectives of the LEADER/CLLD measure?
3. How successful are the operations in pursuing the targets of the LEADER/CLLD measure? (Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction, economic development of rural areas)

4. Give the share of approved operations according to their primary objective - the so-called thematic field of action. (Job creation, Development of basic services, Environmental protection and nature conservation, etc.)
5. How appropriate are approved operations to achieve the objectives listed below? (Creating jobs, development of basic services, environmental protection and nature conservation, Increased involvement of young people, women and other vulnerable groups)
6. What is the share of approved operations involving partners from all three sectors (public sector, private sector, civil society)?
7. In your opinion, what share of the operations approved are innovative (i.e. contributing to the horizontal objective of "innovation")?
8. How many jobs have been newly created and maintained as a result of LAG activities?
9. Do you think that LDS activities has improved access to information and communication technologies (ICT) and use and quality of ICT in rural areas?
10. To what extent does the implementation of LDS promote gender equality and non-discrimination?
11. How much of the operations approved contributes to the following objectives? (Adapting to climate change, protecting the environment, involvement of vulnerable groups)
12. Indicate the number of operations pursuing the following environmental objectives.
13. Briefly state what the above operations covered and what their total value was.
14. Indicate how much the above operations have contributed to the conservation of specific habitats and qualifying species.
15. How many cooperation operations have been approved by the end of 2018?
16. What share of cooperation operations do you carry out in cooperation with foreign LAGs?
17. What difficulties would you point out when implementing cooperation operations?

Theme 6: The implementation mechanism of LDS

1. What is your current collaboration with the MA?
2. What are some of the issues you most face when implementing LDS?
3. Do you have any recommendations for the MA regarding the design, implementation and monitoring of LDS?

Tool 3: Proposed training content for LAGs to improve evaluation capacity

Overall objective:

Establish an evaluation culture and build up the evaluation capacity of LAGs

Specific objectives

- Present concepts, methodologies and tools for evaluation.
- Provide practical examples and experiences of the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD.
- Clarify doubts and contribute to building the evaluation capacity of LAGs.
- Contribute to the collection of quality data by LAGs for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD.

What do I need to know when preparing a training for LAGs?

- The evaluation experience of participants (e.g. self-assessment, thematic evaluation of LEADER/CLLD).
- The familiarity of participants with the monitoring and evaluation system of the LAG/RDP.
- The experience of participants with different evaluation methods.

This will help adapt and focus the content of the training to their capacity and experience

Content

Module 1: Planning the evaluation	Objective
• The objectives of the evaluation and why to evaluate. • The types of evaluation available. • The link/differences between the RDP and LAG level evaluations. • Resources required (human resource skills, budget available). • Time plan of the evaluation and adaptation to the resources available. • Information needs (focus of evaluation). • The role of different stakeholders. • The participative approach of evaluation.	To understand why we want to evaluate, what do we want to achieve, why it is valuable for policy, what do we need in terms of resources and knowledge and how can different stakeholders contribute to the evaluation.

Module 2: Preparing the evaluation	Objective
• The intervention logic and its scope for evaluation, why it is used and how it is constructed (examples of intervention logics). • The Evaluation Questions (EQ) and Judgment Criteria (JC) (examples of EQs and JC). • Drafting the Terms of Reference and criteria for selecting the best offer. • Working with the evaluator and creation of a possible Steering Group to manage the evaluation.	To understand the logical link between the problem we wish to address, the causes of this problem and the different (policy) options to address this problem. To know how to draft a good Terms of Reference and selection criteria for comparing the offers. To know how to manage the evaluation and how to work constructively to ensure a successful evaluation process.

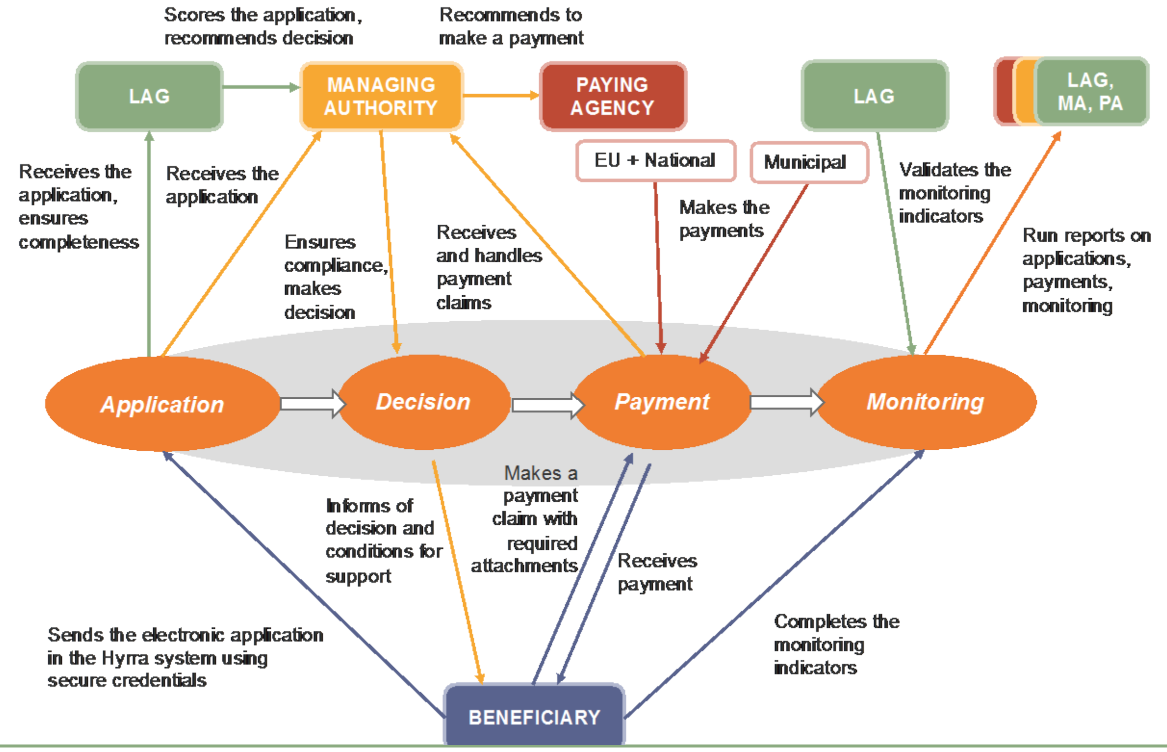
Module 3: Understanding key concepts	Objective
• Primary and secondary contributions of LEADER/CLLD (practical examples). • The output, result and impact indicators (examples depicting the differences between outputs, results and impacts, distinguishing also per topic (e.g. indicators for environment, economic development, innovation)) • Key challenges in calculating result and impact indicators.	To understand the evaluation elements and how they are used in evaluation. To understand the scope for common and programme specific indicators.

• Common and programme specific indicators. • The added value of LEADER/CLLD and its key components (social capital, governance and improved results).	To understand the added value of LEADER/CLLD.
Module 4: Structuring the evaluation and collecting information	**Objective**
• Data collection for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD: data required and data sources. • Challenges for collecting data for the common and programme specific indicators and how to overcome them. • Differences between data used for LAG level evaluations and for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD at the RDP level. • Challenges for quantifying the contributions of LEADER/CLLD and how to overcome them. • Advantages and challenges of using qualitative methods for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD. • Approaches for the collection of additional or missing data for the quantification of LEADER/CLLD contributions. • Methods and tools for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD (key characteristics of each method, resources required, specific tools used, the implementation process of each method, strengths and weaknesses, applicability in different contexts, requirements for implementing each method) with practical examples. • Methods and tools for the analysis of the data and information collected.	To understand the key issues for collecting, managing and using data. To become familiar with a range of available methods and tools that can realistically be used for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD. To learn from other experiences through practical examples of methods that have been applied successfully in other Member States.
Module 5: Reporting and dissemination of evaluation results	**Objective**
• Why it is essential to report the results of evaluations (the scope of reporting, communication and dissemination). • How to report the evaluation results (different means for reporting depending on the target group of the evaluation). • How to use the evaluation results notably the conclusions and recommendations (practical examples of how the follow-up of evaluation results contributes to the improved implementation and/or better/evidence-based policy making).	To understand why it is important to report, disseminate and use the results of the evaluation. To understand how to address the needs of different stakeholders of LEADER/CLLD through communication, dissemination and follow-up. To contribute to improved policy implementation and design through learning from evaluations.

Key success factors of an evaluation team
✓ Previous experience and good knowledge of the programme and its territory. ✓ Good understanding of the principles of LEADER/CLLD. ✓ Knowledge of evaluation methods and tools. ✓ Multi-disciplinary teams to cover all rural development fields (sectoral, environmental, socio-economic). ✓ Capacity to implement quantitative methodological approaches. ✓ Good coordination between evaluators, LAGs and programme authorities.

Tool 4: Information flow and stakeholder responsibilities in Finland

Hyrrä is the e-government and administration system used in **Finland** as a tool for submitting and processing rural development operations applications, decision-making related to granting and paying support, and for monitoring and evaluation of operations. The information system facilitates the processing of support applications, granting and payment of support, recording of control data and monitoring and reporting on support payments and providing information to evaluators. The system is used both for all operations including LAGs, regional and national operations. The Hyrrä system is used primarily by applicants/beneficiaries, LAGs, the MA and PA.



Application phase: The beneficiary submits the electronic application in the Hyrrä system, using secure credentials. The LAG receives the application and ensures its completeness. In case there are missing documents or other completion requirements, the LAG informs the beneficiary, who further completes the application.

Decision phase: The LAG scores the application in the Hyrrä system and recommends the Managing Authority to make a positive or negative decision on the application. The MA ensures the compliance of the application and, if the application fulfils the compliance criteria, makes a decision based on the LAG's recommendation. The applicant/beneficiary is informed of the decision in the system.

Payment phase: The beneficiary makes the payment claim with the required attachments in the Hyrrä system. The MA then receives and handles the payment claim in the system and recommends the PA to make a payment. The PA makes the payment for the EU and national part of the funding to the beneficiary while the LAG gets a notification of the payment decision and makes a payment of the municipal co-funding part to the beneficiary.

Monitoring phase: The beneficiary completes the monitoring indicators in the Hyrrä system. The LAG validates the monitoring indicators in the system. The LAG, MA and PA can run reports on the applications, payments and monitoring information from the Hyrrä system.

Evaluation phase: The evaluators do not have access to the database and therefore request reports of the data they need from the MA, the PA or the LAGs.

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